

PEOPLE AT WORK



BY J.P. WADUGE

Copyright © 2026 J.P. Waduge

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the author, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

This book is a work based on the author's personal study and research in the field of Human Resource Management. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the author assumes no responsibility for errors, omissions, or contrary interpretation of the subject matter herein.

For permission requests, contact the author directly.

First Edition, 2026

A Note of Thanks

*To Rithika, Malika, and Yashen —
for being great friends,
for helping me every step of the way,
and for believing in me when this was still just
an idea.*

This book would not exist without you.

*With gratitude,
J.P. Waduge*

Contents

Part 1: Foundations

Chapter 1 – Introduction to Human Resource Management

Chapter 2 – Organizational Structure, Bands & Grades

Chapter 3 – Core HR Systems, Processes & Policies

Part 2: Building the Workforce

Chapter 4 – The Employee Value Proposition

Chapter 5 – The Recruitment Process

Chapter 6 – The Selection Process

Chapter 7 – Training Development & Employee Orientation

Part 3: Managing the Workforce

Chapter 8 – Performance Management Systems

Chapter 9 – Managing Employee Motivation

Chapter 10 – Employee Retention Strategies

Part 4: Closing the Loop

Chapter 11 – Termination & Offboarding Processes

Chapter 1: Introduction to Human Resource Management

Whatever the size of an organization, it ultimately depends on one thing—people. You might have the finest machinery, the most advanced software, or the most brilliant business plan, but if the right people are not behind it all of that is of no use. It is here that Human Resource Management, or HRM, plays its part.

Essentially, human resources management is the function of an organization which handles all matters concerning the people who work for it; this involves selecting the right individuals, hiring them, assisting them with their settlement, keeping them motivated, helping to develop their abilities, managing their performance, and finally, when the time arrives, looking after their departure from the company as well. To put it briefly, HR takes care of the whole employee lifecycle, from the day a person applies for a job until the day they leave the organization.

Many people believe that the role of human resources is merely about "hiring and firing," but that is a very limited perspective. In fact, human resources is involved in almost every aspect of a business. Consider this: if a company wishes to grow, it needs more staff, and that is where HR comes in. When employees are unhappy and are leaving too frequently, that too is a problem which HR must address. If there is a disagreement between a manager and an employee, HR is generally the one who intervenes to settle it. Similarly, decisions regarding how much someone should be paid or what benefits they receive also come within the remit of HR.

Example 1: The Growing Startup

Picture a small software company which has only five employees at the beginning. When the company expands to have fifty employees, those things which previously occurred naturally—such as everyone knowing what everyone else was doing or the owner taking personal charge of each hiring decision—begin to fail. It is at this stage that an adequate HR function becomes necessary. Someone has to clearly define the roles, establish a proper recruitment process, ensure that new employees are well onboarded, and make certain that people are being managed fairly and consistently. Otherwise,

the company can become very chaotic indeed.

Example 2: The Underperforming Employee

Suppose an employee has been underperforming for a few months. While a competent manager may pick up on this, it is generally HR's responsibility to advise the manager on the correct way to deal with the situation. Should a warning be given first? Should further training be provided? Might there be a personal problem causing the decline in performance? HR introduces an element of structure and fairness to such cases, rather than leaving the matter entirely to the manager's own judgment.

In fact, the purpose of having human resources is to ensure that the relationship between the organisation and its employees is properly managed—fairly, efficiently, and in a manner that is advantageous to both parties. The company ends up with a workforce that is productive and engaged, while the employees obtain an environment in which they are treated fairly and are given opportunities to grow.

In the chapters that follow, we will look in detail at how this actually functions in practice, beginning with an examination of how organizations are structured before going on to

consider how employees are recruited, selected, onboarded, managed, motivated, retained and then finally how their employment comes to an end.

Chapter 2: Organizational Structure, Bands & Grades

Before an organization can begin to consider hiring anyone, it first has to be clear about the form it desires to take. That is precisely where organizational structure plays a role. An organizational structure is basically a plan showing how work is divided up, how authority is distributed, and how the various positions relate to each other in the company. If this plan were not in place, no one would know who reports to whom, who is responsible for making decisions, or how tasks and responsibilities are supposed to be coordinated.

Imagine that the organizational structure of a company is like the skeleton of a human body. Just as the human body requires a skeleton in order to keep all its parts together and enable coordinated movement, a business needs a structure in order to bring its people and processes into alignment so that work can be carried out efficiently rather than everyone working in different directions.

Why Structure Matters

In a tiny company structure has very little importance since when there are just three or four people involved everyone generally knows what the others are up to and decisions can be reached quickly by having a simple chat. However, as the company begins to grow this loose method of working starts to fail because without a clear structure employees lose sight of their roles, decision-making tends to slow down since no one knows who has the power to approve various things, and disagreements arise over who is responsible for what.

Example 1: The Two-Manager Problem

In the case of a medium-sized retail company in which a new employee ends up getting instructions from two different managers, both of whom think that they are the employee's immediate superior, confusion of this kind is very frequent when there is no clear framework to define the reporting hierarchy, and it typically causes the employee to be given instructions from two sides and to be uncertain about which ones to follow. Such a situation could have been completely avoided by having the reporting relationships clearly

established from the very beginning.

Bands and Grades

After a company has established a general structure, the next move is generally to introduce what is referred to as bands and grades. This involves a system for categorising the various roles in the organisation according to factors such as seniority, the level of responsibility, the required skills and the amount of experience. A band or grade basically brings together jobs that are at a similar level, even though the actual job titles may differ.

For instance, a company could have a system in which Grade 1 stands for entry-level employees, Grade 2 refers to employees with a few years' experience who may supervise a small team, Grade 3 corresponds to mid-level managers, and so on, moving up towards senior leadership. A system of this type gives great clarity and fairness to the way the organisation is managed.

Example 2: Why Bands and Grades Matter for Pay

Picture two employees who are working in separate departments of the same company—one in the finance

department and the other in the marketing department—yet both holding positions of comparable responsibility and complexity. If there is no bands and grades system in place, it would be quite simple for these two employees to receive very different salaries even though they are carrying out essentially the same amount of work, just because each department determines its own salaries. A proper grading system, on the other hand, makes sure that pay, benefits, and opportunities for career advancement are handled in a consistent manner throughout the entire organization rather than differing at random from department to department.

Setting Up a Structure and Grading System

When a company is designing an organizational structure, it usually begins by identifying the main functions—for example, sales, operations, finance, and HR—and then determines how these functions are related to each other; on this basis a grading system can be designed which fits neatly onto the structure and assigns each position in the company a clear place within it.

It may seem as though this is a rather administrative or technical task, but it does have a real effect on the way employees experience their work. When there is a clear

hierarchy and a system of grading, it informs the employee precisely where they are in the company, what is expected of them, and what the next stage in their career could be. In its absence, employees are usually left in the dark—unable to tell whether they are advancing, remaining unchanged, or even being properly acknowledged for the work they are doing.

Chapter 3: Core HR Systems, Processes & Policies

After the organization has established its structure and has introduced a definite system of ranks and grades, what it then requires is a series of basic HR systems, procedures, and policies in order to carry out the people-related aspects of the business on a day-to-day basis. While the structure shows what the company appears to be on paper, it is the systems and policies that ensure it works correctly when actual people begin to work in it.

It is useful to consider these systems as the rules which govern the organisation. Although a company might have an excellent structure when set out in a diagram, there will still be confusion, unfairness or inconsistency unless there are clear policies relating to matters such as leave, attendance, discipline and communication.

What Is Meant by HR Systems and Policies?

An HR system is basically a set procedure for dealing with a specific aspect of employment—such as the way in which leave requests are made and approved, how attendance is recorded, or the manner in which salary is processed each month. A policy is the written rule or guideline that specifies how something should be done and the reason for it. When systems and policies are combined, they eliminate guesswork from ordinary HR activities and ensure that all employees are treated in the same way, no matter who their manager is.

Example 1: The Inconsistent Leave Approval

Imagine a company that has no clear leave policy, in which one manager is willing to approve last-minute leave requests for their staff, whereas another manager in the same company will refuse any leave unless it is requested at least two weeks in advance. As a result, the employees begin to compare their situations, and it is natural that this leads to resentment—people come to the conclusion that fairness comes down to which manager they happen to report to, rather than being based on a uniform company-wide standard. A well-documented leave policy that is applied in the same manner in all departments would completely avoid

this kind of situation.

Why a Company Needs Multiple HR Policies

Since no one policy can deal with all aspects, most organizations therefore draw up a number of basic HR policies to address various areas of the employment relationship. Typical examples are a code of conduct, an attendance and leave policy, a disciplinary policy, a grievance handling policy, a health and safety policy, and an anti-harassment policy, together with others. All of these policies are designed to deal with a particular question that is certain to arise at some stage: what is to be done if an employee violates a rule? What should an employee do if they have a complaint about their manager? What are employees expected to do with regard to their daily behaviour?

Example 2: Why a Grievance Policy Matters

Suppose an employee believes they have been unfairly treated by their immediate supervisor, maybe concerning a promotion they thought they should have received. If there is no formal grievance procedure in place, the employee will have no clear and safe way of bringing the matter to light and it may therefore be left unattended, gradually eroding their

confidence in the company. On the other hand, if there is a proper grievance policy, the employee knows precisely whom to go to, what measures will be carried out, and about how long the process will take—this does a great deal to make them feel that they have been heard and treated fairly, even if the end result is not exactly what they had hoped for.

How These Systems Come Together

In reality, the policies and systems in question are not independent of one another; instead they are linked and support each other. For example, a disciplinary policy usually goes hand in hand with a code of conduct, the reason being that the code of conduct states what is expected of employees while the disciplinary policy specifies the actions taken when those expectations are not met. In a similar way, an attendance policy is closely connected to a leave policy since both concern an employee's presence at work.

When the basic systems and policies have been properly documented and made clear to all employees, HR will be in a strong position to manage the workforce in a fair and consistent manner. Moreover, this foundation means that all other HR functions—such as recruitment, performance management, retention, and so on—are much easier to carry

out smoothly, since everyone already knows the fundamental rules according to which the organization operates.

Chapter 4: The Employee Value Proposition

Once the internal foundations of an organization are in place—structure, grades, and core policies—the next question a company has to ask is: why would a good employee actually want to work here? This is where the concept of the Employee Value Proposition, or EVP, comes in.

The Employee Value Proposition is essentially everything an organization offers its employees in exchange for the skills, effort, and experience they bring to the job. It's not just about salary, although salary is certainly part of it. It includes things like career growth opportunities, work-life balance, company culture, benefits, job security, and the general reputation of the organization as a place to work. In simple terms, the EVP answers the question: "What's in it for me if I choose to work here instead of somewhere else?"

Why the EVP Matters

In almost every industry, companies are competing with one another not just for customers, but for talented people. Two companies might offer very similar salaries for the same role, yet one struggles constantly to attract and keep good employees while the other has people lining up to join. The difference usually comes down to the EVP—the overall experience and value an employee associates with working there.

Example 1: The Salary Isn't Everything

Consider two companies offering the exact same salary for a marketing executive role. Company A has a rigid nine-to-five structure, very limited opportunities for promotion, and a culture where employees rarely interact outside of strict work tasks. Company B offers flexible working hours, clear pathways for career progression, and a workplace where employees feel their contributions are recognized. Even though the pay is identical, most candidates—and most existing employees—would naturally lean toward Company B. This shows that salary alone rarely determines whether

someone wants to join or stay with an organization.

Building an Effective EVP

A strong EVP usually rests on a few key pillars: compensation and benefits, career development opportunities, the working environment and culture, and the reputation or mission of the company. Organizations that want to attract and retain top talent typically look closely at each of these areas and ask honestly where they might be falling short compared to competitors in their industry.

Example 2: The Retention Angle

Imagine a company that keeps losing skilled employees within their first year, despite paying competitive salaries. On investigation, HR discovers that employees feel there's no clear path for advancement—people are hired into a role and left there indefinitely, with no visibility into how or when they might be promoted. In this case, the missing piece of the EVP isn't money at all; it's the lack of a visible growth path. Once the company introduces a clear career progression framework and communicates it during recruitment, retention improves significantly, even without any change to

salaries.

The EVP and Recruitment

The Employee Value Proposition also plays a direct role in how a company attracts new talent in the first place. When recruiting, organizations that clearly communicate their EVP—through job postings, interviews, and their overall employer brand—tend to attract candidates who are a better fit and more genuinely interested in the role, rather than candidates who are simply chasing the highest paycheck available

Understanding and shaping the EVP essentially sets the stage for everything that follows in the recruitment process. Once a company knows what it genuinely has to offer, and communicates that honestly, it becomes much easier to attract the right people

Chapter 5: The Recruitment Process

So we have our Employee Value Proposition in place. Now we need to find the people for our company. This is where the recruitment process comes in. The Recruitment Process is what we use to find and hire employees. It is not as simple as it sounds. There are steps involved in the Recruitment Process, and each step is important to make sure we get the right person for the job.

The Stages of the Recruitment Process

1. Developing a Staffing Plan

Before we start looking for employees, we need to know how many people we need and what jobs they will do. We make a plan that looks at how many employees we have now and how many we will need in the future. We think about things like how much our company will grow and if anyone will

leave their job.

2. Job Analysis

Once we know we need an employee, we do a Job Analysis to figure out what the job will entail. We will talk more about Job Analysis later.

3. Writing the Job Description

After we do the Job Analysis, we write a Job Description. The Job Description says what the job is and what the person in that job will do. It also says what skills and experience the person will need. A good Job Description helps us find the right person for the job.

4. Knowing the Laws

We have to follow the laws when we hire employees. There are laws about things like discrimination and minimum wage. We need to know about these laws so we do not break them.

5. Developing a Recruitment Plan

Now that we have the Job Description and we know the laws, we make a Recruitment Plan. We decide how we will find employees and who will be involved in the process.

6. Implementing the Plan

This is where we start looking for employees. We advertise the job. People start applying.

7. Accepting Candidates

Finally, we look at the applications and choose the people we want to interview. We will talk more about this in the next chapter.

Example: Skipping Steps

Let's say we need an accountant and we rush to post a job ad without doing a Job Analysis first. The job ad is not clear, and we get a lot of applications from people who are not right for the job. We waste a lot of time looking at these applications. This is what happens when we skip the steps in

the Recruitment Process.

Job Analysis

Job Analysis is when we gather information about a job. We want to know what the job entails and what skills and experience the person will need. Job Analysis is important for the Recruitment Process.

Methods of Job Analysis

Task-Based Job Analysis

This method looks at the tasks the person in the job will do. It asks what the person will do every day. For example, if we are hiring a customer service representative, we will list tasks like answering phone calls and resolving complaints.

Advantage: This method gives us a clear picture of the job.

Disadvantage: It can be too focused on tasks and not on the skills the person needs.

Competency-Based Job Analysis

This method looks at the skills and qualities the person will need to do the job. It asks what the person needs to be successful in the job.

Advantage: This method is good for jobs where the person needs particular skills to be successful.

Disadvantage: It can be harder to measure the skills the person needs.

Example: Choosing the Right Method

If we are hiring a machine operator, we will use Task-Based Job Analysis. If we are hiring a team leader, we will use Competency-Based Job Analysis.

Recruitment Strategies

Now that we have done the Job Analysis, we need to decide how we will find employees. There are a few ways to do this.

Recruiters

Some companies use recruiters to find employees.

Recruiters can save us time and find people with the right skills.

Advantages: Recruiters have a lot of contacts and can find people quickly.

Disadvantages: Recruiters can be expensive and may not understand our company culture.

Campus Recruitment

This is when we go to universities and colleges to find employees. We can find people who are just starting their careers.

Advantages: This is a way to find young talent and build our brand.

Disadvantages: The people we hire may not have a lot of experience and may leave the company after a while.

The Cost of Recruitment

Hiring employees is not free. We need to know how much it costs to hire someone. We use cost per hire to measure this.

Cost Per Hire Formula:

$$\text{Cost per Hire} = \text{Advertising Cost} + \text{Recruiter Cost} + \text{Referral Cost} + \text{Social Media Cost} + \text{Event Cost}$$

Worked Example:

Let's say we are hiring a marketing manager and we spend money on advertising, recruiters, referrals, social media, and events. We add up all these costs to get the cost per hire.

Advertising Cost: 15,000

Recruiter Cost: 40,000

Referral Cost: 10,000

Social Media Cost: 5,000

Event Cost: 8,000

$$\text{Total Cost per Hire} = 15,000 + 40,000 + 10,000 + 5,000 + 8,000 = 78,000$$

We can use this figure to see which recruitment methods are working and which ones are not.

Yield Ratio

The Yield Ratio is another way to measure how well our recruitment process is working. It shows us how many candidates move from one stage to the next.

$$\text{Yield Ratio} = (\text{Number of candidates who move to the next stage} \div \text{Total number of candidates at the current stage}) \times 100$$

Example:

Let's say we get 200 applications for a job and 40 people are shortlisted for interviews. Then 5 people are offered the job.

Application-to-interview yield ratio: $(40 \div 200) \times 100 = 20\%$

Interview-to-offer yield ratio: $(5 \div 40) \times 100 = 12.5\%$

If a company sees that not many people are applying for a job, it might mean that the job ad is not reaching the right people, or that the job description is not easy to understand. If not many people are getting past the interview stage, it might be because the company is not finding the right candidates or is not screening them properly. By looking at how many people are applying and getting hired over time, the people in charge of hiring can make the process better and more cost-effective.

Chapter 6: The Selection Process

Once the process of finding people has completed and applications start arriving, the organization begins the selection phase. Selection is the act of looking at people who have applied and picking the one person who is best suited for the job. While recruitment is about getting a group of people to apply, selection is about choosing the one from that group.

The Stages of the Selection Process

1. Criteria Development

Before looking at any application, the organization needs to understand what it is looking for. This means going to the job description and the job analysis and turning those needs into clear selection criteria — the specific qualifications, experience, and skills that a candidate must have to be considered.

2. Application and Resume Collection

Once the job is advertised, applications and resumes start to come in. HR collects all of these and does an initial check to remove people who clearly do not meet the basic requirements.

3. Interview

Candidates who have made it to this stage are invited for an interview. This is usually the most important part of the selection process, as it allows the organization to speak with the candidate directly.

4. Test Administration

Depending on the job, candidates might be asked to take one or more tests to show their skills and whether they are right for the role, which we will look at in more detail soon.

5. Making an Offer

Finally, once a candidate has been chosen, the organization gives that person a job offer.

Example: Skipping Criteria Development

Imagine a company that skips creating selection criteria and just interviews people who seem good based on their resumes. Without a shared standard, different interviewers end up valuing different things in candidates, and the company risks hiring someone who is likeable in an interview but not actually right for the job. Clear criteria, set before any applications start arriving, helps avoid this kind of problem.

Types of Interviews

Traditional Interview

This is the one-on-one or small group conversation, usually done in person or by video, where the candidate answers questions from the interviewer.

Panel Interview

Here the candidate is interviewed by several people at once — often a mix of the hiring manager, an HR representative, and sometimes a senior team member from the department.

This allows for multiple opinions to be gathered in one meeting.

Video Interview

Done remotely through a video call, this style is often used for candidates who live far away, or as a first step before an in-person meeting.

Informal Interview: Sourcing Before a Position Opens

Not all interviews happen after a job is advertised.

Sometimes organizations find people before a job is even available — through networking, events, or just by keeping an eye on good people in the industry. When a position opens up, that person is already known, which can make the selection process faster.

Example: The Value of Knowing Someone Early

Imagine a hiring manager who meets a project coordinator at an industry event, months before their company has any open roles. They stay in touch. Six months later, when a project manager position opens, the hiring manager already

has someone in mind whose work ethic and skills they have had time to see — which puts that candidate way ahead of others applying for the job.

Structured vs. Unstructured Interviews

Structured Interviews

In a structured interview, every candidate is asked the same set of questions in the same order, and their answers are usually rated against a fair, consistent system. This makes it much easier to compare people fairly.

Example question: "Tell me about a time you had to deal with a difficult customer. What did you do?"

Unstructured Interviews

In an unstructured interview, there is no set list of questions. The conversation flows naturally, and the interviewer can ask different things as the discussion goes along.

Example question: A conversation that might start with "Tell me a bit about yourself" and then go wherever it goes.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Structured interviews tend to be fairer and easier to explain, because every person is asked the same questions — though they can feel too strict and may miss things that don't fit neatly into the set questions. Unstructured interviews allow for natural conversation and can reveal things a structured interview might miss, but they're harder to compare across people and are more open to personal bias.

Building an Interview Plan

Before interviews happen, it helps to have an interview plan — deciding in advance who will interview the person, what type of interview will be used, which questions will be asked, and how answers will be rated. A good interview plan keeps everything consistent, especially when many people are being interviewed for the same role over a few days or weeks.

Question Types

Situational Questions

These ask a candidate how they would handle a made-up situation.

Example: "If a client called you upset about a missed deadline, how would you handle that conversation?"

Behavioral Questions

These ask a candidate to talk about how they handled a real situation in the past, based on the idea that past actions predict future ones.

Example: "Tell me about a time you missed a deadline. What happened, and how did you handle it?"

Testing and Selection Methods

Cognitive Ability Test

This test checks a candidate's problem-solving, thinking, and overall mental skills. It is often used for jobs that require quick thinking or making complex choices.

Personality Test

This test looks at traits like conscientiousness, openness, or being outgoing, to see how well a candidate's personality might match the job or team.

Physical Ability Test

Used for jobs that require physical work, this test checks things like strength, energy, or balance. Commonly used in jobs like construction or delivery work.

Job Knowledge Test

This test checks how much a candidate knows about the subject they would be working on — for example, a test for accountants about accounting.

Work Sample Test

This test asks the candidate to do a part of the actual work they would be doing. For example, a graphic designer might be asked to complete a design task.

Example: Choosing the Right Test

A company hiring a warehouse worker would probably use a physical ability test, since the job requires lifting and energy. A company hiring a writer would get more out of a work sample test, since seeing a piece of writing tells more than a personality score ever could.

Selection Methods

Clinical Method

In this method, the person making the hiring decision looks at all the information about a candidate — their resume, how they did in the interview, and their test results — and uses their own judgment and experience to pick someone. This depends a lot on the decision-maker's skill and intuition.

Statistical Method

In this method, different parts of the evaluation — like experience, interview score, and test results — are given specific weights, and each candidate is rated numerically across those parts. The person with the highest total score is picked. This method is more objective and easier to justify, because decisions are based on numbers rather than personal feelings.

Example: Clinical vs. Statistical

A small business owner interviewing for an assistant might use the clinical method, relying on their own feeling about who seems best. A large company hiring new people each year is more likely to use the statistical method, since it allows for fair and consistent comparisons between many candidates.

Making an Offer

Once a candidate has been chosen through this process, the final step is to give them a job offer — explaining the job, the pay, the benefits, and the start date. This offer marks the end of the selection process and the start of the person's time

with the organization

Chapter 7: Training, Development & Employee Orientation

When a new employee starts working, the company's job is not done. In fact, it is just beginning. Training and development is the process of helping the employee learn skills and knowledge so they can do their job well and grow with the company. This is not something that happens once when the employee is new — training happens all the time as the employee learns new things and takes on new challenges.

Types of Training

There are several types of training.

Technical Training

This type of training teaches employees about technology, tools, or systems they need to use for their job. When a company gets new software or equipment, technical training helps employees learn how to use it.

Quality Training

This type of training helps employees learn how to prevent mistakes and defects in their work. This is especially important in places where things are made, because a small mistake can cause problems later on.

Competency or Skill Training

This type of training focuses on skills the employee needs to do their job. For example, a sales team might get training on how to negotiate, or an analyst might get training on how to use a tool.

Soft Skill Training

This type of training is about skills that have to do with how the employee works with others, like communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution. These skills are important because they help the employee work well with others, not just do their job.

Safety Training

This type of training teaches employees how to work safely, including things like emergency procedures, how to handle equipment, and how to avoid hazards. This is important in all workplaces, especially in places where the work can be physically demanding.

Example: Training

Imagine a company that only trains its customer service team on how to use new software but does not teach them how to work with angry customers. The team will be good at using the software, but they will still struggle with customer service. This shows that a company needs to provide a mix of training types.

Preparing a Training and Development Plan

To create a training program, a company needs to plan carefully.

Assessment and Learning Objectives

The company needs to figure out what the training is supposed to accomplish, and what the employee should be able to do after the training.

Consideration of Learning Style

Different employees learn in different ways. Some learn best by seeing things, some by doing things, and some by reading or talking about things. A good training plan takes this into account.

Delivery Mode

The company needs to decide how the training will be delivered — in person, online, or a combination of both.

Budget

The company needs to plan for the cost of the training, including the cost of the trainer, the cost of the employee's time, and any other expenses.

Delivery Style

The company needs to decide how the training will be presented — will it be interactive, or will it be a presentation?

Audience

The company needs to know who the training is for, because this will shape everything. Training for new employees is different from training for experienced managers.

Timeline

The company needs to create a schedule for the training, including when it will happen, how long it will take, and how it will fit into the employee's regular work.

Communication

The company needs to communicate with employees about the training, including what the training is, why it is important, and what the employee is expected to do.

Measuring Effectiveness

Finally, the company needs to measure whether the training was effective. This can be done by giving the employee a test before and after the training, or by asking for feedback.

Employee Orientation

Employee orientation is the process of introducing an employee to the company. It is the employee's first experience of the company, and it sets the tone for how they will feel about the company going forward.

Goals of Orientation

The goals of orientation are to reduce the employee's anxiety about starting a job, to reduce the costs associated with a slow start, and to reduce turnover by helping the employee feel settled and supported.

Example: The Cost of Poor Orientation

Imagine an employee who starts a new job and is not given any introduction, explanation of company policies, or support. The employee will likely feel lost and unsupported,

and may start looking for another job. This is an expensive problem that can be avoided with good orientation.

Stages of Employee Orientation

There are several stages of employee orientation.

1. Socialisation

This is the process of helping the new employee build relationships with colleagues and start feeling like part of the team.

2. Information Sessions

These sessions cover company policies and culture, helping the employee understand how things work and what is expected of them.

3. Guided Tour

This is a tour of the workplace, which helps the employee get familiar with their surroundings.

4. Training

This is the training that is relevant to the employee's specific role.

5. Occupational Health and Safety Information

This is information about safety procedures and protocols that are relevant to the workplace.

6. Information on Performance Review

This is information about how and when the employee's performance will be reviewed, so expectations are clear from the start.

7. In-House Training

This is training that is provided by the company, which may be ongoing rather than a one-time event.

8. Mentoring

This is the process of pairing the employee with a more experienced colleague or manager who can provide

guidance and support.

9. External Training

This is training that is provided by outside sources, such as courses, certifications, or workshops.

Types of Training Delivery Methods

There are several types of training delivery methods.

Lecture

This is a method where an instructor delivers information to a group.

Online

This is training that is delivered through digital platforms, which can be self-paced or scheduled live.

On the Job

This is training that happens while the employee is actually performing their role, learning by doing under supervision.

Coaching or Mentoring

This is one-on-one guidance from an experienced colleague or manager, tailored to the individual's needs.

Outdoor / Onsite Programme

This is a team-building activity that is conducted outside the workplace, designed to build collaboration and trust among employees.

Example: Matching Method to Purpose

A company that is introducing a new software system might use online training modules that employees can work through at their own pace. The same company might use a team-building programme to build collaboration between two departments that do not usually work together.

Chapter 8: Performance Management Systems

When an employee has settled into their job, the organization needs a way to see how well that employee is doing. This is where a performance management system comes in. The performance management system is like a report card for the employee — it helps the organization see how well the employee is doing and what they need to work on. The performance appraisal is a part of the performance management system. It is a process where the manager looks at the employee's work and sees how well they are doing.

The manager looks at things like how much work the employee is doing, how they behave at work, and if they are meeting their goals. The performance appraisal is important because it helps the organization make decisions about who to promote, who to give a raise to, and who needs training. It also helps the organization see if there are any problems with an employee's performance before they get too big.

Common Ways to Do Performance Appraisals

There are several ways to do performance appraisals, and each way suits different organizations and jobs. Some common methods include Management by Objective, the Work Standard Approach, the Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale, Critical Incident Appraisal, and the Graphic Rating Scale.

Management by Objective (MBO)

With this method, the manager and employee set goals at the beginning of the appraisal period. At the end of the period, they look at how the employee did compared to those goals. The goals are set using the SMART framework — Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timebound. This way, it is clear whether the employee met their goals or not.

Example: A sales manager and a salesperson might agree that the salesperson will get fifteen new customers by the end of the quarter. At the end of the quarter, the manager can see if the salesperson met that goal or not.

Work Standard Approach (WSA)

This method is about looking at the results of the employee's work. It is used to see if the employee is meeting a standard of production or performance. It is often used in jobs where it's easy to measure how much work is being done, like in a factory.

Example: A factory might say that a machine operator has to make two hundred units per shift. The manager can then see if the operator met that goal or not.

Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale (BARS)

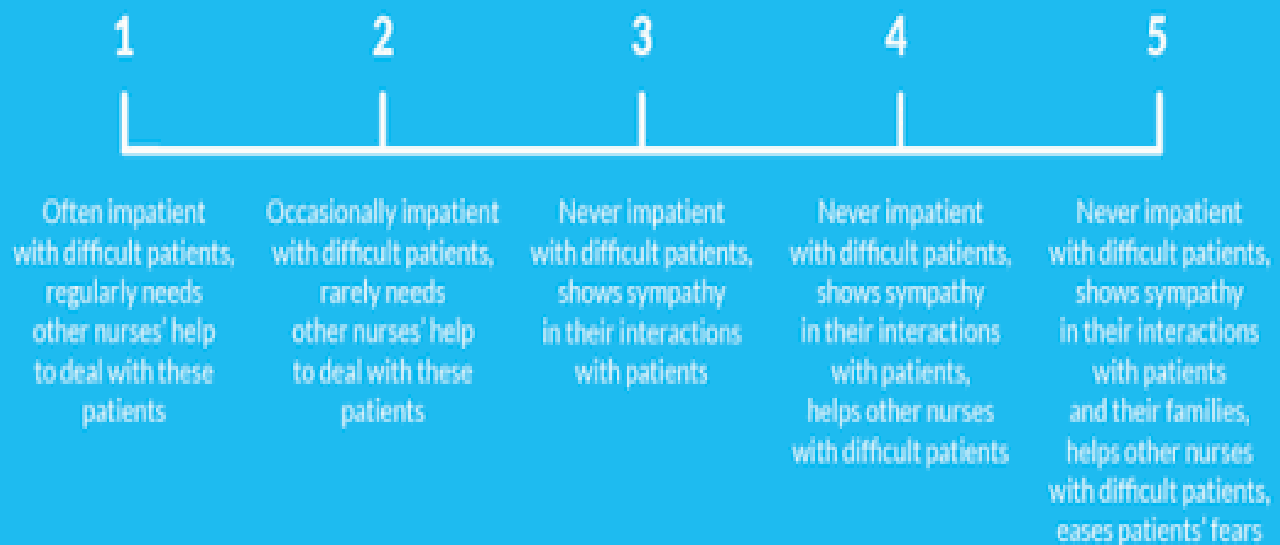
This method uses a rating scale to look at the employee's behavior. It is not just about the results of their work but also about how they do their job. It is often used together with other appraisal methods to get a more complete picture of the employee's performance.

Example: A customer service person might be rated on a scale from one to five based on how they listen to customers and solve their problems.

BEHAVIORALLY ANCHORED RATING SCALE (BARS) EXAMPLE

Job role: Nurse

Performance dimension: Dealing with difficult patients



Critical Incident Appraisal

With this method, the manager keeps track of things the employee does during the appraisal period. The manager might write down times when the employee did something well and times when they did not do well. This helps the manager build a fuller picture of the employee's performance.

Example: A manager might write down that an employee handled a customer well but also missed a deadline. This helps the manager see both the good and the bad.

Graphic Rating Scale (GRS)

This is a common way to do performance appraisals. The manager rates the employee on a scale from one to five based on different parts of their job. This gives an easy way to see how well the employee is doing overall.

Example: An employee might be rated on a scale from one to five based on how they work with others, how good their work is, and how often they are on time.

Checklist Scale

With this method, the manager answers yes or no questions about the employee's performance. This is an easy way to evaluate specific parts of the employee's performance.

Example: A manager might ask if the employee answers the phone within three rings, or if they keep their desk clean. The manager just has to answer yes or no.

**Employee Performance Appraisal
XYZ Company**

Employee's Name _____

Title _____

Department _____

Please select yes or no for each of the statements.

	Yes	No	Comments
This employee works well with the people on his/her team.			
He/she is well liked and respected by people on the team.			
The employee has in depth knowledge of his or her job.			
The employee needs minimum supervision in performing his or her job.			
Aspects of job the employee should improve			

Date _____

Signature of employee _____

Signature of manager _____

Ranking

This method involves ranking employees from best to worst. This can be useful for seeing who the top performers are, but it can also be biased, since it isn't always fair to compare employees who have different jobs or responsibilities.

Example: A manager might rank their employees from one to ten. This can help the manager see who the top performers are, but it might not be fair to the employees who end up ranked lower.

Choosing the Right Method

The organization should choose an appraisal method that fits the job being evaluated. For example, a factory might use the Work Standard Approach, while a customer service team might use the Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale. Many organizations use a combination of methods to get a fuller picture of the employee's performance. The performance management system and the appraisal method should be fair and helpful for both the organization and the employee. The employee should know what is expected of them and how they will be evaluated — this way, the employee can do their best, and the organization can get the best results.

Chapter 9: Managing Employee Motivation

Now that we have a way to track and manage how well our employees are doing their jobs, we need to think about what makes them want to do their work. Just because we are managing their performance does not mean they will be motivated to do a good job. Motivation is what makes an employee want to put in effort, stay engaged, and do well. We need to understand what motivates our employees, because what makes one employee tick might be totally different from what makes another employee tick. Some people are motivated by money, others by recognition, others by the chance to grow and learn, and others by feeling like their work is important.

Theories of Motivation

Over time, people have come up with ideas to help us understand what motivates people at work.

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y

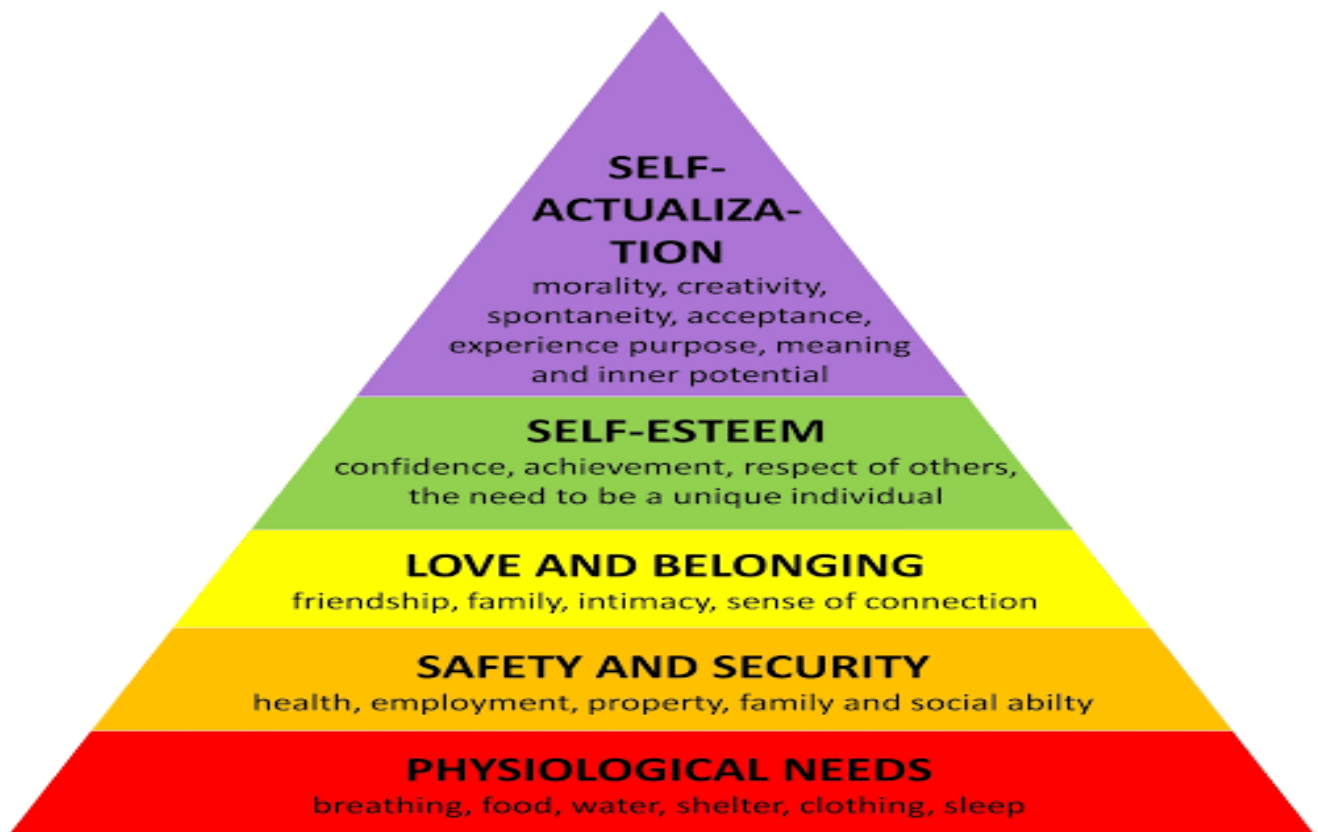
This theory talks about two kinds of employees. A Theory X employee is someone who does not like to work and needs to be pushed to do their job. They need to be told what to do and do not like to take on responsibilities. On the other hand, a Theory Y employee is someone who is self-motivated, likes their job, and is happy to take on new responsibilities. As people who work in human resources, part of our job is to figure out which kind of employee we are dealing with and try to create an environment that helps them become more self-motivated.

Example: Let's say we have an employee who just does the minimum and does not want to take on any extra work. At first we might think they are a Theory X employee. But if we give them freedom to do their job, make sure they know why their work is important, and recognize them when they do a good job, they might start to take on more responsibilities and become more self-motivated.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's theory says that people are motivated by different kinds of needs. First we need to have our basic needs met, like food and safety. Then we need to feel good about ourselves and have relationships. In the workplace, this means we need to have certain basic conditions met, like fair pay and safe working conditions, before we can start to think about what really motivates us. These basic conditions are called hygiene factors. If they are not met, employees will be unhappy – but just meeting these basic needs does not mean employees will be motivated to do a good job. We also need motivation factors, like recognition, meaningful work, and opportunities to grow and learn.

Example: A company that pays its employees fairly and provides a safe working environment has met the basic needs of its employees. But if the employees do not feel like their work is meaningful or that they are recognized for their contributions, they will not be motivated to do a good job. To motivate them, the company needs to add recognition programs and opportunities for advancement.



Expectancy Theory

This theory says that motivation is based on two questions. First, does the employee want what is being offered? Second, does the employee think they can achieve it if they try? If the answer to both questions is yes, the employee will be motivated. If the answer to either question is no, motivation will be low.

Example: Let's say an employee is told that if they meet a sales target they will get a bonus. If they really want the bonus and think they can meet the target if they try, they will be motivated to work toward it. If they do not think they can

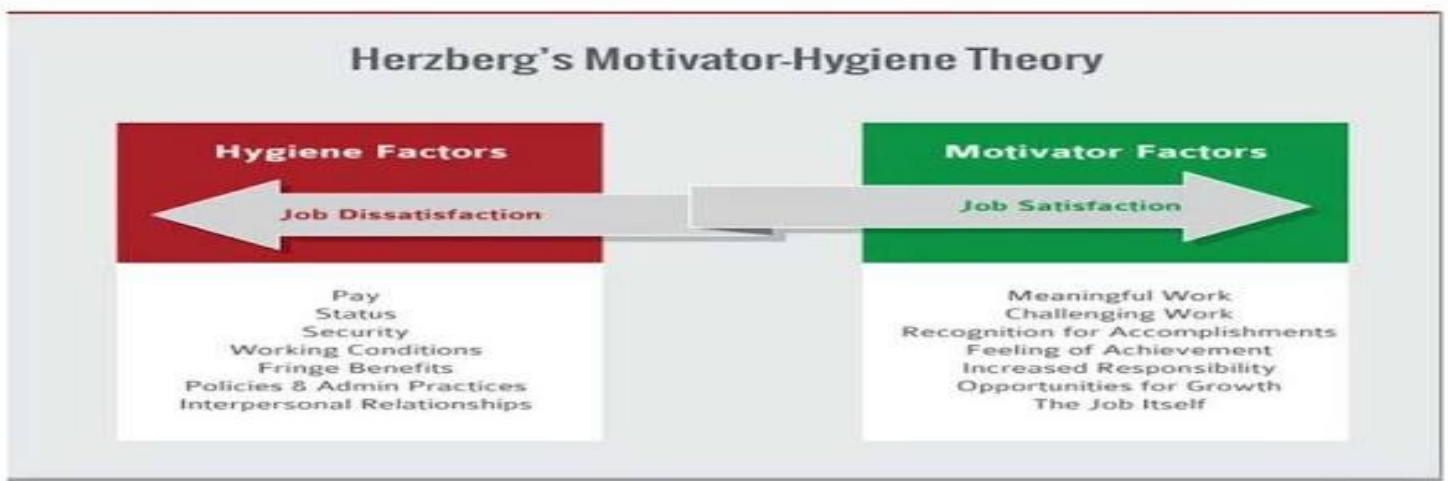
meet the target, they will not be motivated, even if they want the bonus.



Two-Factor Theory

This theory says that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not the same thing. Just because we remove the things that make an employee unhappy does not mean they will be satisfied with their job. We need to address both satisfaction and dissatisfaction separately.

Example: Let's say an employee is unhappy with their working conditions. If we fix the conditions, they might not be unhappy anymore — but that does not mean they will be satisfied with their job. We need to do something to make them feel fulfilled and engaged in their work, like giving them recognition or meaningful projects.



Bob Nelson's Six Dimensions

Bob Nelson says there are six things that contribute to motivation:

1. Making sure employees know where the company is going, and why their work is important.
2. Encouraging honest communication.
3. Letting employees make decisions and take on responsibilities.
4. Giving employees the freedom to do their jobs in the way that works best for them.
5. Helping employees grow and learn.
6. Recognizing and rewarding employees for doing a good job.

Why This Matters: The Time Perspective

We spend a lot of time at work — 60 to 70 percent of our waking hours. So motivation is not something that just affects our job, it affects our whole life. That is why it is so important to get it right.

Practical Ways to Build Motivation

Here are some things we can do to build motivation:

- Make sure employees feel valued and appreciated for their contributions.

- Listen to what employees have to say and take their opinions seriously.

- Find ways to recognize and reward employees that go beyond just giving them money.

- Encourage employees to get to know each other and have fun together.

- Create programs that recognize and reward employees for doing a good job.

Example: A company that starts a recognition program where employees can nominate each other for doing a good job might see a big increase in morale. This is not just because of the reward — it's because employees feel seen and appreciated for their hard work.

Chapter 10: Employee Retention Strategies

What Is Retention?

Employee retention refers to an organization's ability to keep its employees over time, rather than losing them to resignation or turnover. While recruitment and selection focus on bringing the right people in, retention is about making sure those same people choose to stay once they're there. Studies consistently show that retention is influenced by a combination of factors — compensation, growth opportunities, relationships with management, and the overall work environment — meaning no single fix solves a retention problem on its own.

Why Retention Matters

Managing employee retention is crucial for maintaining a healthy organization. High staff turnover is costly — not just in direct recruitment expenses, but in lost productivity,

disrupted teams, and the time it takes for a new hire to reach the same level of competence as the person who left.

Beyond the financial cost, frequent turnover can also damage morale among remaining employees, who may begin to question the stability or culture of the organization.

Reasons for Voluntary Turnover

When employees choose to leave on their own, it's rarely for just one reason. Several common causes tend to appear across organizations and industries.

Poor Job Fit

This occurs when an employee's skills, interests, or working style don't align well with the role they've been placed in. Even a talented employee will struggle to stay motivated in a job that doesn't suit them.

Example: A highly analytical employee placed in a customer-facing sales role, where the job demands constant social interaction rather than data analysis, may quickly become disengaged and eventually leave for a role that better matches their strengths.

Lack of Growth

Employees who feel they have no path forward — no opportunity for promotion, skill development, or increased responsibility — often begin looking elsewhere, even if they're otherwise satisfied with their day-to-day work.

Example: An employee who has been in the same position for five years with no discussion of advancement may start applying elsewhere, not because they dislike the job, but because they see no future in staying.

Internal Pay Equity

This refers to employees perceiving unfairness in how pay is distributed within the organization, particularly when they discover that colleagues doing similar work are paid noticeably more.

Example: An employee who learns that a newly hired colleague, with less experience, was offered a higher starting salary for the same role may feel undervalued and begin considering other opportunities.

Ineffective Leadership

This concerns weaknesses at the senior or organizational leadership level — such as a lack of clear vision, poor decision-making, or failure to communicate the direction of the company.

Example: If leadership frequently changes company priorities without explanation, employees can lose confidence in where the organization is headed and become more open to opportunities elsewhere.

Ineffective Management

Distinct from leadership at the top, this refers to problems with an employee's direct manager — such as poor communication, lack of support, or unfair treatment. It's often said that employees don't leave companies, they leave managers.

Example: An employee with a manager who rarely gives feedback, takes credit for team successes, or fails to advocate for their team, is far more likely to start looking for a new job than one with a supportive, communicative manager.

Workload

Excessive or poorly managed workload can lead to burnout, which is one of the most common drivers of voluntary resignation.

Example: An employee consistently required to work far beyond their contracted hours, without additional compensation or support, is likely to eventually leave for a role with a more sustainable workload.

External Reasons

Sometimes an employee leaves for reasons entirely outside the organization's control — such as relocating for a partner's job, pursuing further education, or family circumstances.

Example: An employee who resigns because their spouse has been transferred to another city is leaving for reasons the organization had no real ability to prevent.

Retention Strategies

Given these common causes of turnover, organizations can adopt a range of strategies to improve retention.

Salaries and Benefits

Competitive pay remains one of the most direct retention tools, but benefits matter just as much. This includes things like health insurance, paid time off (PTO), and pay-to-performance (PTP) structures, where compensation is tied to measurable achievement rather than a flat salary alone.

Example: A company that introduces a PTP bonus structure for its sales team, rewarding employees directly for exceeding targets, often sees stronger engagement than one offering only a fixed salary with no performance-based incentive.

Training and Development

Offering employees programs to develop their skills, along with benefits like tuition reimbursement for further education, signals that the organization is invested in their long-term growth, not just their current output.

Example: A company that reimburses an employee's tuition for a part-time professional certification demonstrates commitment to that employee's career, which in turn strengthens their loyalty to the organization.

Performance Appraisals

Beyond their evaluative function, appraisals also serve a retention purpose — they give employees visibility into their own progress and provide a structured opportunity for managers to recognize and appreciate good work.

Example: An employee who receives specific, genuine recognition during an appraisal — rather than a generic "good job" — is more likely to feel valued and motivated to continue performing well.

Succession Planning

This involves identifying and developing employees internally who could take on more senior roles in the future, rather than always looking externally when a leadership position opens up.

Example: A company that identifies a promising mid-level manager and begins preparing them for a future director role — through mentoring and stretch assignments — gives that employee a clear, visible path to advancement within the organization, reducing the temptation to seek that growth elsewhere.

Flextime and Telecommuting

Offering employees flexibility in when and where they work can significantly improve retention, particularly for roles where rigid hours aren't strictly necessary. This isn't suitable for every role or industry, but where it can be applied carefully, it often has a strong positive effect.

Example: A company that allows its administrative staff to work from home two days a week, while maintaining in-office days for roles requiring physical presence, can improve satisfaction without disrupting operations.

Management Training

Since ineffective management is one of the leading causes of turnover, investing in training for managers — covering communication, feedback, and leadership skills — directly addresses one of the most common root causes of employee departure.

Example: A company that puts new managers through a structured leadership training program, covering how to give constructive feedback and support their teams, often sees

measurably lower turnover within those managers' teams over time.

Conflict Management and Fairness

Unresolved workplace conflict is a significant driver of dissatisfaction. Organizations typically address this through a graduated set of approaches: discussion between the parties involved, formal recommendations from HR, mediation, where a neutral internal party helps both sides reach a resolution, and arbitration, where an outside party listens to both sides and issues a binding decision.

Example: A disagreement between two team members over project responsibilities might first be handled through direct discussion. If that fails, HR might step in to mediate. In more serious or unresolved disputes, an external arbitrator may be brought in to make a final, binding decision.

Job Design and Enlargement

This involves restructuring roles to make them more engaging, often through job enrichment — adding more meaningful responsibility and variety to a role — and employee empowerment, giving employees more autonomy over how they carry out their work.

Example: A company that expands a data entry clerk's role to include analyzing and presenting basic trends from the data they process, rather than simply inputting it, gives that employee a greater sense of ownership and engagement in their work.

Other Retention Approaches

Beyond the strategies above, some organizations offer additional services designed to make employees' lives easier outside of work itself — such as on-site childcare, wellness programs, or assistance with personal errands.

Example: A company that offers an on-site or subsidized daycare service for employees with young children removes a significant daily stressor, making the organization a noticeably more attractive place to stay employed.

Bringing It Together

No single retention strategy works in isolation. An organization that pays competitively but has poor management will still struggle to retain staff, just as one with excellent leadership but no growth opportunities will eventually see its best people leave for advancement elsewhere. Effective retention comes from addressing multiple factors simultaneously, tailored to what actually drives dissatisfaction within that specific organization.

Chapter 11: Termination and Offboarding

"It's easy to hire someone. It's work getting someone fired the right way."

This line captures why this final chapter matters. Hiring people gets a lot of attention in Human Resources. The way a company handles the end of the employment relationship — whether that is a resignation, a retirement, or a termination — says just as much about how professional and fair that company really is.

What Is Termination and Offboarding?

When an employee leaves a company, it is called employee separation. Termination refers to a separation that the company initiates, due to poor performance, misconduct, or a violation of company policy. These two words are used depending on the circumstances — separation is the general term, while termination describes one particular type of separation, often the most sensitive one to handle.

Before a company considers termination, most cases actually begin as performance issues. How those issues are handled early on often determines whether termination becomes necessary at all. Employee separation is the term used to describe any situation where an employee's relationship with the company ends, for whatever reason. Termination and offboarding are both parts of employee separation.

Handling Performance Issues

Every company should have policies and a structured performance issue model in place, used to correct behavior before it escalates into something more serious. Having written company rules is not enough — companies should have a plan to deal with performance issues, and this plan should be fair and consistent.

Classifying Performance Issues

There are different types of performance issues. Some are serious and require immediate attention, while others are less serious and can be resolved with a simple conversation.

Mandatory Issues

These are violations that go beyond ordinary performance concerns — things like sexual assault, harassment, theft, or other conduct that seriously breaches trust or safety. A clear written policy is absolutely essential for these situations, since mandatory issues typically bypass the step-by-step correction process and move straight toward formal investigation and likely termination. Mandatory issues are very serious and can have serious consequences for both the company and the employee.

Example: An employee found to have harassed a colleague would fall under a mandatory issue, triggering immediate formal investigation rather than a verbal warning. The company should have a policy for dealing with mandatory issues, and this policy should be followed carefully.

Single Incident

This refers to a one-off misstep — a misspoken comment, an insult, or an isolated lapse in judgment. These can usually be resolved through a phone call or a brief informal discussion, without the need for formal documentation. Single incidents are not usually serious, but they should still be addressed by

the company.

Example: An employee who snaps at a colleague during a stressful day but has no history of this kind of behavior would typically just need a quiet word from their manager. The goal is to resolve the issue fairly without making a big deal out of it.

Behavior Pattern

This describes an incident that starts repeating, suggesting the issue stems from habit or simply hasn't been properly addressed the first time. At this stage, a direct conversation is recommended, and in more serious cases, a written warning may be issued. Behavior patterns are more serious than single incidents because they suggest the employee is not learning from their mistakes.

Example: An employee who has now been late to three team meetings in a row, despite an informal chat about it, has moved from a single incident into a behavior pattern. The company should take this seriously and try to address the issue before it becomes a bigger problem.

Persistent Pattern

If the behavior pattern continues after a warning, it becomes a persistent pattern. At this point, it's worth considering whether the employee may be lacking training, motivation, or support. A further conversation is important, both to help the employee and to protect the company, and a written warning is often recommended at this stage if one hasn't been issued already. Persistent patterns are serious and can have serious consequences for both the company and the employee.

Example: An employee who continues missing deadlines after a documented conversation and a development plan may be facing a persistent pattern rooted in a skills gap, rather than simple carelessness — worth investigating before jumping straight to discipline. The company should try to understand the root cause of the problem and address it before taking action.

Disciplinary Intervention

Before termination is considered, companies should generally work through a disciplinary process. However, a proper investigation should always take place before any disciplinary action is implemented — acting without

investigating risks unfair treatment and potential legal exposure. Disciplinary intervention is a significant step, and it should be taken carefully and fairly.

Investigating a Performance Issue

Proper documentation is vital throughout this process, and managers should keep records covering:

- Date of the incident

- Time of the incident

- Location

- Notes from any discussion held

- Improvement plan (if applicable)

- Description of the incident

- Signatures of both the employee and the manager

With this documentation in place, both the manager and employee should understand what happens next. This typically leads to an **investigation interview** — a private meeting used to make the employee formally aware of the issue and gather their side of the situation. Investigation is a key step in dealing with performance issues, and it should be done carefully and fairly.

Defining Discipline

For any disciplinary system to be fair and defensible, the underlying rules need to meet certain standards:

All rules and procedures should be written down, not left informal or assumed.

Rules should relate directly to safety and organizational productivity, not arbitrary preferences.

Rules should be written clearly and descriptively, leaving little room for misinterpretation.

Rules should be outlined during employee orientation, so expectations are clear from day one.

Rules should be reviewed and revised periodically, to stay relevant as the company changes.

Disciplinary Intervention Process

This structured process is used to correct non-mandatory issues, and every step should be properly documented.

Example Progressive Discipline Policy:

Offence	Action	Documentati on
1st	Verbal warning	Not documented
2nd	Written warning	Documented
3rd	Written warning	Documented, development plan may be created
4th	Suspension	Documented, development plan may be applied
5th	Termination	Investigation interview conducted

These specific policies vary between companies. Some use as many as eight steps before termination, while others use fewer. What matters most is that the chosen policy is written down, communicated clearly, and applied consistently to every employee. The goal is to be fair and consistent, and to protect both the company and the employee.

Types of Employee Separation

Retirement

This occurs when an employee reaches an age, or has built up sufficient pension benefits, where they choose to voluntarily leave the workforce. Retirement is a part of the employment cycle, and companies should have a plan in place to deal with it.

Retrenchment

This refers to a reduction in the number of employees through downsizing or rightsizing efforts, aimed at reducing costs or improving organizational efficiency. Retrenchment is a difficult process, but it is sometimes necessary for the company's survival.

Redundancy

This occurs when a specific job is no longer needed, as a result of a change in corporate strategy. The role itself disappears, regardless of how well the person in it was performing. Redundancy is a difficult situation for the employee, and the company should handle it with care and compassion.

Resignation

This happens when an employee chooses to leave the company on their own accord, either independently or through a Voluntary Departure Package (VDP), which typically includes favorable benefits to encourage employees to leave voluntarily, often during restructuring. Resignation is a part of the employment cycle, and companies should have a plan in place to deal with it.

Dismissal / Termination

This occurs when an employee is asked to leave the company due to poor performance or misconduct, following the disciplinary process outlined above. Termination is a

serious step, and it should be taken carefully and fairly.

Death or Disability

This applies when an employee can no longer perform their job due to an injury or health condition. If the incident occurred in relation to work, compensation is typically owed. Depending on company policy, a next of kin may be entitled to certain benefits, or in some cases, take over related responsibilities. Death or disability is a difficult situation, and the company should handle it with care and compassion.

Employee Absconding

This describes a situation where an employee simply abandons their job, stopping attendance without any notice or communication at all. Employee absconding is a difficult situation, and the company should have a plan in place to deal with it.

Handling Employee Resignation

When an employee chooses to leave, their manager should schedule an exit interview. If Human Resources believes the resignation is avoidable — for example, if it stems from a

frustration rather than a firm decision to leave — there may be an opportunity to address the issue and retain the employee. The contents of any resignation conversation should remain strictly confidential throughout this process.

If the resignation is accepted, the employee should work with their manager to determine a plan for handling their existing workload during the transition period.

Exit Interview Guidelines

Exit interviews should be conducted by Human Resources, alongside the departing employee's manager, and should include simple, direct questions such as:

What was your reason for leaving?

What did you like or dislike about working here?

What would you change, and are there any incentives you'd suggest improving?

Example: An exit interview that reveals employees citing the same complaint — say, a lack of growth opportunities in a particular department — gives Human Resources valuable, actionable insight that might not surface through any other

channel. Exit interviews are a way for companies to learn and improve.

Handling Employee Termination

Thorough documentation is essential here. Every step of the disciplinary process leading up to the termination should be properly recorded, since this documentation protects both the company and the employee in the event of any dispute.

Conducting a Termination Interview

This is one of the most sensitive conversations in Human Resources, and it deserves careful preparation:

- Develop a careful, well-thought-out plan before the meeting.

- Make sure everyone involved arrives on time — there's no benefit to prolonging the tension.

- Keep the meeting brief, around 10 minutes.

- Carry yourself in a neutral tone throughout.

- Have all documentation prepared in advance.

- Remain available after the interview to answer any questions the employee may have.

Never conduct a termination over the phone — it should always be handled in person wherever possible.

Example: A manager who walks into a termination meeting without having the relevant documentation ready, or who lets the conversation drag on for thirty minutes of back-and-forth justification, risks turning a difficult moment into something far more distressing and legally exposed for the company. Termination interviews are difficult, and they should be handled with care and compassion.

Closing Thoughts

Every company should have clearly written policies covering each of these procedures, from performance correction through to termination. Having these policies in place before they're ever needed isn't just good practice — it protects the company from inconsistency, unfair treatment claims, and legal risk, while giving employees a clear, transparent understanding of what's expected of them and what happens if those expectations aren't met. Termination and offboarding are parts of the employment cycle, and companies should handle them with care and compassion.

We have now gone all the way around — from when a company first realizes it needs a worker, to when that worker finally leaves. Human resource management is really about taking care of the entire time a worker spends at the company. This means being thoughtful and fair to the worker from the start to the end of their time there. At its heart, human resource management is about being consistent.

